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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on school system characteristics that affect the dropout rate in the Chicago public high schools. Although the primary variable for investigation is attendance rate, other school system variables examined include type of school, percentage of low-income students in a school, and the overall level of student ability for a school as indicated by average reading scores. Chapter 1 provides statistics on enrollment and dropout rates for each of the four types of high schools in the Chicago system: selective academic, selective vocational, nonselective integrated (consisting of at least 30% white students), and nonselective segregated (consisting primarily of minority students). Chapter 2 provides statistics on the percentage of low-income students, average reading scores, school attendance rates, and school dropout rates for each type of school. The third chapter documents the process of recording attendance rates through sample attendance report forms submitted by high school principals during the 1984 school year. Chapter 4 is a critique of the state funding formula, arguing that it results in a lack of monetary incentive to reduce the dropout rate and chronic truancy. The final chapter relates the dropout rates of schools to attendance records, showing that schools with high dropout rates had proportionally fewer days of attendance than schools with low dropout rates. A system of reimbursement based on rewarding school systems on a per diem basis for student attendance is therefore recommended. References are included. (TE)

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FIRST REPORT TO THE ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In Response To
PA 84-712 of the 84th Illinois General Assembly
"THE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP ACT"

CHICAGO PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS:

HOW THEIR STUDENTS' LOW INCOME, READING SCORES, AND ATTENDANCE RATES RELATE TO DROPOUT LEVEL AND TYPE OF SCHOOL

by
Joyce Sween, Ph.D. and Charles L. Kyle, Ph.D.
with Olga Reyes, M.A.

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY
Department of Sociology
Chicago Area Studies Center

1987

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First Report to the Illinois State Board of Higher Education

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

CHICAGO AREA STUDIES CENTER

1987

Executive Summary

› › › Generally, schools with high dropout rates have lower attendance rates.

› › › While schools with high dropout rates have a disproportionately high percentage of students from low-income homes, selective vocational schools have both low dropout rates and a high percentage of low-income students.

› › › While there is a positive relationship between schools with high dropout rates and schools which have low reading percentile scores, all selective vocational schools and some non-selective integrated schools have both low dropout rates and low reading percentile scores.

› › › There was an atypical uniformity in attendance rates within dropout categories - - less than 2% separated any type of school with the same dropout level. The stability of the attendance rates for the different types of schools was unexpected. The other school characteristics studied showed more variability among the types of schools.

› › › The attendance rates for 1983 and 1984 were nearly identical.

› › › Large differences between LOW dropout rate schools (13.8% to 28.9%) and HIGH dropout rate schools (52.0% to 71.5%) are not reflected in attendance rate differences. The largest attendance rate difference is 7.6% between LOW and HIGH dropout rate schools.

› › › The "Average Daily Attendance" or "ADA" formula (based on "the three

best months" of attendance) used in calculating the State funding for schools, takes away any monetary incentive for school districts to keep students in school. Dropouts and chronic truants do not appear to be reflected in the "ADA".

› › › If school districts were reimbursed by State, Federal, and local funders based on a per diem for student attendance, "lost school days" in 1984 would have reduced funding to District #299 (Chicago) by approximately $38,430,886.

› › › To the best of our knowledge, none of the attendance data used in this study had been monitored on site.

THE AUTHORS:

Dr. Joyce Sween is Professor of Sociology and Public Administration in DePaul University's College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Sween was an author of We Have A Choice: A Study Of Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. She was primarily responsible for the design of the research which studied 91,000 high school freshmen over a four year period. She is a leading authority on evaluation research, statistical methodology and regression discontinuity designs. She has published more than 40 articles on the subjects of education, fertility, urbanization, bilingual education, Japanese quality circles and women's work. Her papers have been presented in West Africa, Israel, Sweden, Canada, Bulgaria, Guatemala, and Mexico. She is recognized for her computer analysis of large-scale data bases, including that of the census of the country of Cameroon, in West Africa, and of the National Science Foundation's fellowship program dealing with 200,000 science doctoral recipients. Dr. Sween has served on task forces including the U.S. Presidential Task Force on Violence for which she analyzed public reaction to the assasination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. She is currently the evaluator of a four-year high school dropout prevention demonstration project sponsored by Coca-Cola and Aspira Inc. of Illinois, and of the Hispanic Alliance Consortium for the Ford Foundation. She holds her Ph.D. in psychology and evaluation research from Northwestern University, where she was a university fellowship holder for three years.

Rev. Charles L. Kyle Jr., Ph.D., is Adjunct Research Associate for DePaul University Chicago Area Studies Center. He was Project Director and an author of We Have A Choice: A Study Of Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. This study, which included descriptive analysis of more than 90,000 student records of Chicago Public High School students, was sponsored by Illinois Attorney General and the Chicago Board of Education. Father Kyle was granted three fellowships from Northwestern University's Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research while working on his Ph.D. His dissertation was sponsored by the National Center for Bilingual Research, Aspira Inc. of Illinois, the Mac Arthur Foundation and the Hispanic Policy Development Project, and reported that official dropout statistics reported by the Illinois State Board of Education and the Chicago Public Schools were inaccurate. Father Kyle's numerous task force memberships include U.S. Senator Paul Simon's Task Force on Chicago Public Schools, Illinois State Task Force on Hispanic Student Dropouts, Task Force of Chicago Public Schools on Dropout Reduction, Mayor Washington's Task Force on Youth Crime Prevention, and Cardinal Bernardin's Task Force on Gangs. Father Kyle holds his Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University.

Olga Reyes served as Research Assistant for this study, as well as, for We Have A Choice: A Study Of Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. Ms. Reyes has received a Master of Arts degree in Psychology from DePaul University. Her master's thesis studied a group of students at a Chicago Public High School in order to identify what variables influenced students to stay in school when other students having similar backgrounds chose to drop out. She is now working on her doctoral dissertation.

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The "Educational Partnership Act" encourages Illinois institutions of higher education to aid Illinois elementary and secondary schools through meaningful research. While the full value of the act has yet to be realized, the vision of Senate President Philip Rock who sponsored this law should be commended. The "Educational Partnership Act" should bring many helpful insights, in the future, to Illinois educational reform. The present study is only a modest first step in that direction.

The advice and suggestions which were given by State Superintendent of Education, Dr. Ted Sanders and Drs. Daniel Dixon and William Humm were very welcome and helpful as was their offer to continue pursuing the questions raised concerning attendance records.

DePaul University under the leadership of its President, Rev. John Richardson, C.M., has been extremely supportive of this research and many other projects aimed at bettering Chicago's urban educational experiences. Other members of the administration and faculty were also supportive of this project. Special thanks are given to Dr. Richard Meister, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and to Dr. Therese Baker, Director of the Chicago Area Studies Center. Dr. Patricia Ewers, Vice President and Dean of

Faculities, Mr. Richard Yanikoski, Associate Vice President, Dr. Majorie Piechowski, Director of Sponsored Programs and Research also are gratefully acknowledged for their encouragement.

This is the second in a series of studies being conducted by the Chicago Area Studies Center at DePaul University which focus on strategies and policies which will increase high school retention. Dr. John Lane, Professor at the School of Education and Dr. Armando Triana, Director of the Center for Research on Hispanics were members of the research team for the first study: "We Have a Choice: Students At Risk of Leaving Chicago Public Schools" and provided helpful suggestions for this report.

Lastly, help and cooperation were received from various indiiduals who work for the Chicago Board of Education. Among these are included: Dr. Joseph Lee, Mr. Jack Mitchell, Dr. Salvatore Vallina, Dr. Irving Brauer, Dr. William Rice, Dr. Hamilton Mc Master, Dr. John Graven, Mr. Clifford Cox, Mr. Frank Guerrieri, Mr. Jesus Sosa.

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Introduction

The magnitude of the dropout rate for Chicago Public High Schools is now well documented. The latest study, We Have A Choice: Students At Risk of Leaving Chicago Public Schools, (Kyle, Lane, Sween, Triana, with Reyes, 1986, Chicago: DePaul University) found the dropout rate for the entering freshmen classes of 1978, 1979, and 1980 to be 36.0%. A similarly high dropout rate has been found by such studies as: The Aspira Chicago Dropout Study (Aspira Inc. of IL and Kyle, 1984), Designs for Change's The Bottom Line: Chicago's Failing Schools and How to Save Them (Moore, 1985), Dropouts From Chicago Public Schools (Chicago Panel on Public School Finance, Hess and Lauber, 1985), and the Illinois Joint Legislative Task Force on the Hispanic Student Dropout: A Generation Too Precious To Waste (Illinois General Assembly, 1985).

Various causes and explanations have been offered for the youths dropping out of school. Some of these focus on the dropout's individual or family characteristics. Among the many variables that have been studied and implicated as influencing dropout behavior are: family background including one or two-parent home (Howell and Frese, 1982), parent education (Hill, 1979; Mare, 1980), socio-economic status of family (Beck and Muia, 1980), pregnancy (Rumberger, 1983), student's self-concept (Mahan and Johnson, 1983), reading and mathematic achievement (Lloyd, 1978), and ability (Poole and Low, 1982).

While of inherent value for the insight it lends into the profile of the dropout, this emphasis on the dropout tends to undermine the importance of variables "external" to the dropout that might affect school completion. Further, this focus also tends to provide solutions to the dropout problem

that involve "changing" or "fixing" the dropout, thus assuming that the problem lies wholly therein.

A different focus is to emphasize the system. That is, what is it about the system (school) with which the student is involved that affects school retention?

The following studies have examined some school characteristics which relate to at risk students. Orfield et al. (1984) compared city and suburban schools by race and income yielding a picture of two very different and separate educational systems. Mainly, the report documented a system of inequality in metropolitan Chicago from elementary and secondary institutions, on through community colleges and universities. They concluded that the racial make-up of these high schools in their study seemed to indicate that city and suburban schools serve separate and unequal societies. The presence of low-income students was found to be related to the presence of minority students. Finally, educational differences were noted between city and suburban schools, in the number of teachers within the school, specialists in pre-collegiate subjects, lower dropout rates, and smaller class sizes. City schools were found to be characteristically inferior to suburban schools in these aspects.

Felice and Richardson (1977) found in their study that there was lower likelihood of dropout activity among minority students who are bussed to schools of higher social class with teachers who hold higher expectations of their students. Carranza (1975) examined school characteristics. He found a relationship between dropout rates and class size, class load for teachers, and number of teacher job moves and transfers requests, thus, implicating teachers' working conditions in dropout figures.

Researchers have documented the relationship between chronic absenteeism and dropout behavior (Conrath, 1984; Stroup and Robins, 1972). In their study, Stroup and Robins (1972) examined elementary school predictors (in a sample of 233 black urban males). In a retrospective analysis of school records, thirteen pre-high school variables were explored, including grade school absence, quarters repeated, school changes, family life style, IQ score and others. The most powerful predictors yielded in the study were course failures and elementary school absence.

Most recently, the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance (1986) released a study of four matched pairs of urban high schools (matched on reading scores, age, race, and poverty level.) The study sought to determine how the schools with the lower dropout rates within each pair, differed from the counterpart school with the higher dropout rate. Six major characteristics were found to distinguish the low and high dropout schools, including overall better attendance at the schools with the lower dropout rates.

The report, Where's Room 185?, heralded a curious finding related to the attendance topic. In one school, a researcher found many students were assigned to study hall in Room 185, but he could never find the room. It appears that the room did not, in fact, exist. It was used, most frequently, for a student's first or last period of the day. Room 185 on a student's schedule, in effect, represented a free period. Student attendance was found to be poorly monitored by school personnel in some of the schools studied. Observers had difficulty finding students in the places they were expected to be, even when office records reflected their presence. Teacher absence reports were further found to be inefficiently kept. In some cases, teachers even

stopped recording absences for students who had missed several consecutive days, thus creating a perfect attendance record for a student who was chronically truant.

It seems, in this latter study, that certain delinquent behaviors were not only reinforced by school personnel but even condoned and perpetuated by them.

While there are individual characteristics of students which are important to our understanding of dropout behavior, it is also clear that there are important school characteristics which are related to this decision. This study will focus on some of these characteristics which affect the dropout rate. While the primary variable for investigation is attendance rate, the other variables which address the school system rather than the student are: type of school, percentage of low income students in a school, and the overall level of student ability for a school as indicated by average reading scores.

Chapter One

Dropout Rates Among the Four Types of Chicago Public High Schools

The Chicago Public Schools has 62 high schools. Each entering freshman class has an approximate enrollment of just over 30,000 students. Table 1.1 combines the entering freshman classes for three years (1978, 1979, and 1980) for these 62 high schools. The high schools as shown in Table 1.1 are of four types. Nearly two thirds of the entering freshmen attend the non-selective segregated type of high school. The smallest proportion of entering freshmen (6.6%) attend the selective academic type of high school.

The four types of high schools can be briefly described as follows:

A Selective Academic high school is the "cream" of the Chicago Public High School System. (In this report the following high schools are included in the Selective Academic category: Lane Technical, Whitney Young Magnet, and Lindbloom Technical.) These are basically college preparatory schools with high standards for admission.

A Selective Vocational high school is also a high school which can screen its admissions and has higher standards for entering freshmen. These schools also offer courses which prepare students for post secondary education. (In this report, the following schools are considered as Selective Vocational high schools: Chicago Vocational, Prosser Vocational, Dunbar Vocational, and Westinghouse Vocational.)

The remainder of the schools are general high schools. "These schools or vocational or other special schools with minimal selection criteria." (Designs for Change, 1985. The Bottom Line: Chicago's Failing Schools and How to Save Them, p. 22).

The Non-selective Integrated high school is a general high school which is usually located in a white neighborhood and has an enrollment which is not predominantly minority. According to the voluntary desegregation consent agreement between the Chicago Public Schools and the U.S. government, an integrated school is one which has at least 30% white enrollment.

A Non-selective Segregated high school is one which has an enrollment composed primarily of minority students.

Table 1.1

Enrollment for the Entering Freshman Classes
of 1978, 1979, 1980 by Type of School *

School Type

	Selective Academic	Selective Vocational	Non-Selective Integrated	Non-Selective Segregated	All Types
% Enroll.	6.6%	9.3%	21.8%	62.2%	
N Enroll.	6251	8759	20566	58657	94233
N Schools of each Type	3	5	16	38	62

*From We Have A Choice: Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. 1986. Kyle, Lane, Sween, Triana, with Reyes. Table 1.2

In Table 1.2, a breakdown of enrollment (by race and sex) in each of the four types of Chicago Public high schools is given for the freshmen classes of the 1978, 1979, and 1980. The data for all three years are presented as a single entity. Of the entering freshmen of 1978, 1979, and 1980, .2% were American Indian, and 3.5% were Asian. These ethnic classifications are not included in Table 2 or in other Tables in this report.

Of the three ethnic groups included in Table 1.2 (Black, White, Hispanic), there are nearly equal percentages of males and females enrolled for each group. Overall, eighty-four per cent of the students were enrolled in the non-selective general high schools. Hispanic males and females are about 10% over represented in the non-selective general high schools while black males and females are slightly under represented (2% to 3%). For the selective academic high schools, Table 1.2 shows that white males, and to a lesser extent white females, are over represented in the selective academic schools. Black males and females are over represented in the selective vocational high schools.

Table 1.2

Enrollment by Race and Sex for the Entering Freshmen Classes of 1978, 1979, 1980 by Type of Schools *

School Type

	Selective Academic	Selective Vocational	Non-Selective General**	All Types
Black Male	4.7% (1381)	13.4% (3931)	81.8% (23904)	31.0% (29216)
Black Female	5.9% (1807)	13.1% (3985)	80.9% (24675)	32.3% (30467)
White Male	13.8% (1454)	3.0% (313)	83.1% (8628)	11.1% (10495)
White Female	9.8% (1009)	2.5% (256)	87.8% (9048)	10.9% (10313)
Hispanic Male	4.8% (346)	2.1% (150)	93.2% (6760)	7.7% (7256)
Hispanic Female	3.9% (254)	1.9% (124)	94.2% (6108)	6.9% (6486)
N students each school	6.6% (6251)	9.3% (8759)	84.0% (79223)	(94233)
N schools of each type	3	5	54	62 (100.0)

*From We Have A Choice: Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. 1986. Kyle, Lane, Sween, Triana, with Reyes. Table 2.2

**Includes the 16 non-selective integrated and the 38 selective segregated high schools.

The selective schools have a lower dropout rate than the non-selective schools. Table 1.3 shows the percentage of dropouts from the entering freshmen classes of 1978, 1979, and 1980. As shown in Table 1.3, the 16.3% of the entering freshmen of the classes of 1978, 1979, and 1980 who entered the selective academic high schools dropped out. This is well below the national dropout rate of 29.1% for the class of 1984 according to the 1986 report of the United States Department of Education. Also shown in Table 1.3, the dropout rate in non-selective segregated high schools is well above the national rate (29.1% for the class of 1984 according to a 1986 report of the U.S. Department of Education.) In these schools, 42.4% of the entering freshmen do not complete school.

Table 1.3

Percentage of Dropouts from the Entering Freshman Classes of 1978, 1979, 1980 by Type of School*

School Type

	Selective Academic	Selective Vocational	Non-Selective Integrated	Non-Selective Segregated	All Types
% Dropout	16.3%	24.4%	28.7%	42.4%	36.0%
N Dropout	1019 of	2136 of	5902 of	24904 of	33961 of
N Enroll.	6251	8759	20566	58657	94233
N Schools of Each Type	3	5	16	38	62

*From We Have A Choice: Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. 1986. Kyle, Lane, Sween, Triana, with Reyes - Table 2.1

Table 1.4 indicates the percentage of dropouts by race, sex, and school type for the same freshmen group entering in the 1978, 1979, and 1980 classes. The lower dropout rates for selective schools which were seen in Table 1.3 are similarly low for blacks, whites, and Hispanics in those schools, as seen in Table 1.4. For the selective academic schools, blacks, whites, and Hispanics have equally low dropout rates, well below the national average. Black, white, and Hispanic females have exceptionally low dropout rates in the selective academic schools. On the other hand, males in non-selective segregated high schools have as much as 1.7 times the dropout rates as the national average for 1984 (29.1%). Females, regardless of ethnic group, have dropout rates 10% below the male dropout rate in the non-selective schools.

Table 1.4

Percentage of Dropouts by Race, Sex, and Type of School
for the Entering Freshmen Classes of 1978, 1979, and 1980*

School Type	Selective Academic	Selective Vocational	Non-Selective Integrated	Non-Selective Segregated	All Types
Sex: MALE					
Race					
Black	20.3%	28.5%	34.0%	49.0%	44.0%
	280 of 1381	1119 of 3931	601 of 1768	10846 of 22136	12846 of 29216
White	18.1%	27.5%	34.4%	39.3%	33.0%
	263 of 1454	86 of 313	2239 of 6509	872 of 2219	3460 of 10495
Hispanic	22.8%	17.3%	36.0%	45.0%	41.3%
	79 of 346	26 of 150	616 of 1712	2273 of 5048	2994 of 7254
Sex: FEMALE					
Race					
Black	11.1%	20.6%	22.8%	37.4%	32.6%
	201 of 1807	820 of 3985	463 of 2119	8437 of 22556	9921 of 30467
White	15.7%	26.2%	22.6%	33.6%	24.2%
	158 of 1009	67 of 256	1568 of 6948	706 of 2100	2499 of 10313
Hispanic	15.0 %	14.5%	22.75%	38.5%	34.5%
	38 of 254	18 of 124	415 of 1510	1770 of 4598	2241 of 6486

*From We Have A Choice: Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. 1986. Kyle, Lane, Sween, Triana, with Reyes - Table 2.4.

Chapter 2

Percentage of Low Income Students, Average Reading Scores, School Attendance Rates, and School Dropout Rates

While in Chapter 1, we saw that non-selective segregated schools had the highest dropout rate (42.4%), this percentage is an average based upon the 38 non-selective segregated schools and their 58,657 entering freshmen in the classes of 1978, 1979, and 1980. Contained within this average were some schools which had very high dropout rates and some schools with reasonably low dropout rates. In fact, looking at all 62 Chicago Public High Schools, dropout rates range from 13.8% to 71.5% for the freshman class of 1980 as reported by the Chicago Panel on Public School Finance (1986).

In order to examine these differences in more detail, the 62 Chicago Public High Schools are described by type and by low to high dropout rates. In Table 2.1, school dropout rates are grouped into four categories ranging from LOW (13.8% to 28.9%) to HIGH (52.0% to 71.5%). While it is not surprising that all but one of the eight selective schools have low dropout rates, it is indeed surprising to find that one fourth (4) of the 16 non-selective integrated schools have dropout rates that are also in the LOW category. One fourth (10) of the 38 non-selective segregated high schools also have dropout rates that are in the low ranges. While it is interesting to note that there is a wide range of dropout rates among the non-selective high schools, it is sad to observe that 44.7% (17) of the 38 non-selective segregated high schools had dropout rates in the HIGH category.

Table 2.1

Percentage of Type of High School
with Low and High Dropout Rates*

School Dropout Rate**	Selective Academic	Selective Vocational	Non-Selective Integrated	Non-Selective Segregated	All Types
LOW 13.8% to 28.9%	100.0% (3)	80.0% (4)	25.0% (4)	10.5% (4)	24.2% (15)
MED. LOW 29.0% to 41.9%	-- (0)	20.0% (1)	31.2% (5)	15.8% (6)	19.3% (12)
MED. HIGH 42.0% to 51.9%	-- (0)	-- (0)	37.5% (6)	28.9% (11)	27.4% (17)
HIGH 52.0% to 71.5%	-- (0)	-- (0)	6.2% (1)	44.7% (17)	29.0% (18)
N of Schools of Each Type	(3)	(5)	(16)	(38)	(62)

*From We Have A Choice: Students At Risk Of Leaving Chicago Public Schools. 1986. Kyle, Lane, Sween, Triana, with Reyes.

**Based on Cohort of 1980 Entering Freshmen as reported in: Dropouts From Chicago Public High Schools (Hess, G. A. and Lauber, D., 1985. Chicago, IL: Chicago Panel on Public School Finances.)

The Illinois Legislative Task Force on Hispanic Student Dropouts noted that some overage students leave school because they are removed from welfare due to their age; in fact, many students testified to the Task Force that they had dropped out of school in order to find work to supplement family income. The Task Force report and numerous other studies have indicated a relationship between financial need and dropping out. This observation is consistent with the percentages shown in Table 2.2. Table 2.2 shows that the schools with the highest dropout rates have the highest percentages of low income students.

As seen in Table 2.2, in schools with low dropout rates (13.8% to 28.9%) the average percentage of low income students is 37.1% while in those schools with high dropout rates (52.0% to 71.5%), the average percentage of low income students is 60.9%. Many will not surprised to note that of the 17 non-selective segregated schools with the highest dropout rates that these same schools have the highest percentage of low income students (62.6%). But surprisingly the 4 selective vocational schools in the low dropout category had nearly the same proportion of their enrollment who were classified as low income students (57.0%).

Again, many will not be surprised to note that of the 4 non-selective segregated schools with the lowest dropout rates, the percentage of low income students is also relatively low (35.8%). Yet, it is surprising to note that the 7 non-selective integrated schools with the higher dropout rates had less than one-third of their enrollment classified as low income.

Table 2.2

Average Percentage of Low Income Students in 1984
for Each Type of School by Dropout Rate

School Dropout Rate*	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9%	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%
School Type				
Selective Academic	37.1	--	--	--
Selective Vocational	57.0	55.2	--	--
Non-Selective Integrated	18.0	22.8	30.5	31.9
Non-Selective Segregated	35.8	53.2	54.0	62.6
All Schools**	37.1 (13)	40.7 (12)	45.7 (17)	60.9 (18)

*Based on Cohort of 1980 Entering Freshmen as reported in: Dropouts From Chicago Public High Schools (Hess, G. A. and Lauber, D., 1985. Chicago, IL: Chicago Panel on Public School Finances.)

**Overall mean= 47.4%, from: School Characteristics 1984, Chicago Board of Education

Reading scores have been found to be related to student achievement and to dropping out. In the DePaul study of "Students At Risk of Leaving Chicago Public Schools," an analysis of the reading scores of 81,537 freshmen in the graduating classes of 1982, 1983, and 1984 showed that twice as many (42.8%) of the students who entered with reading scores below level dropped out (only 19% of those reading at or above grade level dropped out).

Table 2.3 summarizes mean percentile reading scores for students within each type of school by LOW to HIGH dropout rate. Table 2.3 shows that the average reading percentile scores for students in grade 11 at a school is related to the dropout rate of the school. Considering all the schools together, those with the lowest dropout rates have the highest reading percentile scores. The average percentile score in reading for schools with the low dropout rates is 48.0. The average percentile score in reading for schools with the highest dropout rates is 19.4. While one would not find i surprising that schools with the lowest dropout rates have reading percentile scores as high as 71.3 (selective academic) and 64.0 (non-selective segregated), it is interesting to note that all the selective vocational schools had low percentile scores in reading (mean = 36.2) and also had the lowest dropout rates.

Table 2.3

Average Grade 11 Reading Percentile Scores 1983
for Each Type of School
by Low to High Dropout Rates

School Dropout Rate in 1983*	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9%	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%
Schools				
Selective Academic	71.3 (3)	--	--	--
Selective Vocational	36.2 (4)	36.0 (1)	--	--
Non-Selective Integrated	41.6 (6)	33.5 (4)	30.5 (16)	--
Non-Selective Segregated	64.0** (1)	37.8 (6)	20.8 (9)	19.4 (20)
All	48.0 (14)	36.1 (11)	24.7 (15)	19.4 (20)

*As reported in: Dropouts From Chicago Public High Schools (Hess, G. A. and Lauber, D., 1985. Chicago, IL: Chicago Panel on Public School Finances.)

**Kenwood High School

O'Neill (1985) studied the relationships between poverty, poor achievement, truancy, and dropping out. In a controlled experiment, he found a positive relationship between tutoring at risk youths, achievement, attendance, and graduating. In addition, the New York State Democratic Task Force on Truancy (1978) found the students best prepared for college were those who had the lowest rates of absenteeism.

It is clear that if a student rarely even attends school, there will be a greater likelihood of poor achievement and a higher likelihood of dropping out. Thus, we would expect schools with the highest dropout rates to have the lowest achievement scores and lowest attendance rates. Prior Table 2.3 showed such a relationship between reading percentile scores and drop out rates. Table 2.4 will examine the relationship between a school's attendance rate and the dropout rate.

As expected Table 2.4 shows that there is relationship between a high average attendance rate at a school and the dropout rate. Those schools with the lowest dropout rate (13.8% to 28.9%) have the highest average attendance rate (90.5%). And those schools with the highest dropout rates (52.0%% to 71.5%) have lower average attendance rates (81.9%).

Unlike previous tables in this chapter wherein we observed unexpected differences among the schools grouped according to the four levels of dropout rate (LOW, MEDIUM-LOW, MEDIUM-HIGH, HIGH) with regard to reading percentile scores and percentage of low income students, Table 2.4 is amazingly consistent for the four levels of schools grouped together by dropout rate. In fact, within each of these four groupings, less than separates any type of school with the same dropout level. This contrasts with Table 2.2 where there

is a 29% difference in the percent of low income students enrolled in selective vocational schools with low dropout rates and non-selective integrated schools with low dropout rates. This high level of uniformity in Table 2.4 also contrasts with the differences noted in Table 2.3 wherein the average reading percentile score for schools with the lowest dropout rate ranged from 36.2 for the selective vocational schools to 71.3 for the selective academic high schools.

Table 2.4

Average School Attendance Rates Reported in 1984*
For Each Type of High School by Dropout Rate

School Dropout Rate**	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9%	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%
Selective Academic	91.1 (3)	--	--	--
Selective Vocational	90.2 (4)	88.3 (1)	--	--
Non-Sel. Integrated	90.1 (4)	89.5 (5)	85.6 (6)	80.3 (1)
Non-Sel. Segregated	91.0 (4)	86.9 (6)	85.3 (11)	82.0 (17)
Total	15	12	17	18
All School	90.5	88.1	85.4	81.9

* While this statistic is reported as a 1984 statistic in School Characteristics 1984, Chicago Board of Education, the number itself is computed from 1983 school attendance data. The overall average attendance equals 86.0 percent, based on the average of the "average daily attendance rate" for each of the 62 high schools reported in the School Characteristics - 1984. The percentages reported above in each cell of the table are averages computed from the "average daily attendancce rate" of each high school included in the cell.

** Based on dropout rates for class of 1984 as reported by Chicago Panel of Public School Finance in Dropouts from Chicago Public Schools (1984).

Chapter 3

The Recording of Attendance Rates

In the previous Chapter, Table 2.4 show small and uniform but consistent decreases in average daily attendance with increases in dropout rates. While the average school attendance rates reported in Table 2.4 were obtained from the Chicago Board of Education's School Characteristics 1984, the 1984 attendance rates themselves are computed from school attendance for the prior 1983 school year. In order to have maximum confidence in the average attendance rates, it was decided to compute the average attendance rates for the schools for the actual school year of 1984 using documents submitted by the local school principals.

While the formulas used in the computation of average daily attendance are rather simple, it may be helpful to follow the process in a step-by-step manner in order to clarify their compilation.

Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2 consist of sample attendance report forms submitted by a local high school principal to the local District Superintendent. Exhibit 3.1 is the form that was submitted for the first semester of school year 1984. Exhibit 3.2 is the form that was submitted for the second semester of school year 1984. The numbers circled on the left hand side of each form. These numbers are the numerator of a fraction which is uded to compute the enrollment of the individual classes. The denominator of the fraction consists of the number of days of class in the semester. See Exhibit 3.3 and 3.4. The student enrollment of a school can be computed by dividing the "total days of membership for the semester" by "number of school days for the semester." For example, the ninth grade enrollment for the second semester of the school in Exhibit 3.2 is 122863 divided by 100 as seen in Exhibit 3.4.

The enrollment for 9th grade is 1229.

JANUARY 1984

HIGH SCHOOL SEMESTER REPORT OF ENROLLMENT, DAYS OF MEMBERSHIP, AND DAYS OF ATTENDANCE FOR THE SEMESTER ENDING JANUARY 1984

School _____ Unit No. _____ Dist. _____ Principal _____
Signature

	TOTAL DAYS OF MEMBERSHIP FOR THE SEMESTER	TOTAL DAYS OF ATTENDANCE FOR THE SEMESTER
Ninth Grade	109018 ~~109002~~	93599.5 ~~93600½~~
Tenth Grade	58456	52490½
Eleventh Grade	42985	38700
Twelfth Grade	30106	28092
Satellite (Outpost)		
Educable Mentally Handicapped	8179	6770
Trainable Mentally Handicapped		
Blind		
Partially Seeing		
Deaf		
Hard of Hearing		
Severe Learning Disabled		
Behavior Disordered	212	169
Emotionally Disturbed	878	783
TOTAL FOR THE SCHOOL	249834 ~~249818~~	220604 ~~220607~~

EXHIBIT 3.1

*Name of school unit number, district, and principal's signature have been deleted from this Exhibit. All the numbers on the form are orgiinal, including the handwritten numbers, but the circles and squares around the numbers are provided to clarify the Exhibit.

ENROLLMENT for the Semester

Boys	Girls	Total
*1748 ~~1639~~	*1763 ~~1580~~	*3511 ~~3220~~

*Enrollment Only. DO NOT Report Membership.

HIGH SCHOOL SEMESTER REPORT OF ENROLLMENT, DAYS OF MEMBERSHIP, AND DAYS OF ATTENDANCE FOR THE SEMESTER ENDING JUNE 1984

JUNE 1984

School _____ Unit No. _____ Dist. _____ Principal _____
Signature

	TOTAL DAYS OF MEMBERSHIP FOR THE SEMESTER	TOTAL DAYS OF ATTENDANCE FOR THE SEMESTER
Ninth Grade	122863	103484
Tenth Grade	70787	62207
Eleventh Grade	49993	44280
Twelfth Grade	40970	37033½
Satellite (Outpost)		
Educable Mentally Handicapped	9610	7541½
Trainable Mentally Handicapped		
Blind		
Partially Seeing		
Deaf		
Hard of Hearing		
Severe Learning Disabled		
Behavior Disordered	788	433
Emotionally Disturbed	1431	1077
TOTAL FOR THE SCHOOL	296442	256056

EXHIBIT 3.2

*Name of school unit number, district, and principal's signiture have been deleted from this Exhibit. All the numbers on the form are orgiinal, including the handwritten numbers, but the circles and squares around the numbers are provided to clarify the Exhibit.

	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of Graduates	176	249	425

ENROLLMENT for the Semester

Boys	Girls	Total
* 29	* 33	* 62

*Enrollment Only. DO NOT Report Membership.

HIGH SCHOOLS

ORT OF ENROLLMENT, MEMBERSHIP, AND ATTENDANCE FOR JANUARY 84

OR GENERAL HIGH SCHOOLS BASED ON 56 UNITS

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS FOR SEM 77 FOR MONTH 18

JAN. 1984

MEMBERSHIP	ATTENDANCE	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	ABSENCE	% ATTENDANCE
94394.8	1466456.5 OK	81469.8	232649.5 OK	86.31 OK
94841.1	6416123.5	83326.3	886638.0	87.86

EXHIBIT 3.3

IVED 2147

7827

URN 311

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

93874 ✓ OK

SECTION A

1 GRADE 12	SATELLITE	OTHER	TOTAL
7090	168	0	44970
7916	136	0	45310
15006	304	0	90280 ✓ OK

MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

BOYS	47188
GIRLS	46686
TOTAL	93874 ✓

SECTION B

IND	PART SEE	DEAF	HD OF HEAR	SEV LD	BEH DIS	EMT DIST	ORTHO	TOTAL
3	2	77	19	123	102	131	0	2218
4	3	53	14	28	21	54	0	1376
7	5	130	33	151	123	185	0	3594 ✓ OK

HIGH SCHOOLS

PORT OF ENROLLMENT, MEMBERSHIP, AND ATTENDANCE FOR JUNE 84

OR GENERAL HIGH SCHOOLS BASED ON 5o UNITS

JUNE 1984

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DAYS FOR SEM 100 FOR MONTH 20

MEMBERSHIP	ATTENDANCE	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE	ABSENCE	% ATTENDANCE
857.8 ✓	1410941.5 ✓	70547.1 ✓	346215.5 ✓	80.30 ✓
433.3	7640509.0	76405.1	1402817.0	84.49

D 2035

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

10000

074 87722 ✓

CTION A

MEMBERSHIP TOT

ADE 12 SATELLITE OTHER TOTAL

6917	141	0	41925	BOYS	4360
8403	113	0	42804	GIRLS	4406
1491 ✓	256	0	84427 ✓	TOTAL	87722

SECTION B

PART SEE	DEAF	HD OF HEAR	SEV LD	BEH DIS	EMT DIST	ORTHO	TOTAL
2	77	18	116	109	135	0	2034
3	52	15	19	21	52	0	1261
5	129	33	135	130	187	11	3295 ✓ clk

SECTION C

DEAF	HD OF HEAR	M/S LD	BEH DIS	EMT DIST	OH	TOTAL
1	37	1936				

40

EXHIBIT 3.4

EXHIBIT

In order to arrive at the average daily attendance rate for the actual 1984 school year, the total days of membership for each semester for all grades for each school are added. (See the numbers circled in Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2.) The sum is the total membership days for the school for the year. In this example, the year is 1984. Then, the "total days of attendance" for each semester for all grades for each school are added. (See the numbers in boxes on Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2). The sum is the total attendance days for the school for the year, again, 1984 in this example.

The average daily attendance rate for the school is computed by dividing the "total days of attendance" for the 1984 year by the "total days of membership" for the 1984 year. For example, the average daily attendance rate for the first semester for the school in Exhibits 3.1 would consist of (93599 + 52490 + 38700 + 28092) divided by (109018 + 58456 + 42985 + 30106) which equals 88.5% for the first semester of school year 1984. The enrollment for this first semester for the school is (109018 + 58456 + 42985 + 30106) divided by 77 class days which equals 3,124 students. The formula for computing enrollment is "total days of membership" for the semester divided by "number of school days" for the semester.

The average daily attendance rate for the second semester for this same school (Exhibit 3.2) would consist of (103484 + 62207 + 44280 + 37033) divided by (122863 + 70787 + 49993 + 40970) which equals 86.8% for the second semester of school year 1984. The enrollment for the second semester of this school is (122863 + 70787 + 49993 + 40970) divided by 100 class days which equals 2,846 students. Thus, there was a decline in enrollment of 278 students or 8.9% from semester 1 to semester 2.

The average daily attendance rate for this school for the 1984 school

year is the average of the semester attendance rates, (88.5% + 86.8%) divided by 2, which equals 87.7%. While the enrollment for this school drops 9% from semester one to semester two, the average daily attendance rate remains almost exactly the same (dropping by 1.9%).

This same process for computing attendance rates was carried out for all 62 Chicago Public High Schools using the "High School Semester Report of Enrollment, Days of Membership, and Days of Attendance" (as seen for one school in Exhibits 3.1 and Exhibit 3.2) for the semesters ending January 1984 and June 1984. The results for all the schools are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Average Daily Attendance Rates for 1984
for Each Type of High School by Low to High Dropout Rate
(Based on Total Actual Days of Attendance in 1984
Divided by Total Possible Attendance Days in 1984)*

School Dropout Rate**	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%	
Selective Academic	90.8				
(N)	(3)				3
Selective Vocational	90.1	88.3			
(N)	(4)	(1)			5
Non-Selective Integrated	91.0	89.3	87.4	80.4	
(N)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(1)	16
Non-Selective Segregated	91.9	87.3	85.9	83.2	
(N)	(4)	(6)	(11)	(17)	38
All Schools	90.7	88.4	86.4	83.1	87.3
Total N	(15)	(12)	(17)	(18)	62

*The Overall "Average Daily Attendance" (ADA) rate for 1984 ("Total Actual Days of Attendance" in 1984 divided by "Total Possible Attendance Days") equals 87.3 percent. See also Table 2.4.

** Based on dropout rates for class of 1984 as reported by Chicago Panel of Public School Finance in Dropouts from Chicago Public Schools (1984).

The average daily attendance rates for 1984 as shown in Table 3.1, indicates a relationship between high average attendance rate at a school and the dropout rate. Schools with the lowest dropout rate (13.8% to 28.9%) have the highest average attendance rate (90.7%). Schools with the highest dropout rates (52.0% to 71.5%) have lower average attendance rates (83.1%).

Table 3.1 is almost identical to Table 2.4. Average school attendance rates reported in 1984 but based on 1983 attendance are strikingly similar to 1984 attendance rates which are based on actual days of attendance in 1984 (as calculated in this report). The largest percentage difference between the rates among types of school with different dropout rates is 1.9% while the smallest difference is .1%. For all schools, the difference in attendance rates between low and high dropout rate schools is 7.6%. The dropout rate difference between these two levels, on the other hand, is as high as 57.7%.

In Table 2.2 (Percentage of Low Income Students) and Table 2.3 (Average Reading Percentile Scores) clear patterns were shown which indicated that there was a relationship between the dropout rate of a school and the percentage of low income students in the school and a relationship between the dropout rate of the school and the average reading percentile scores in that school. But it was also seen in both Tables 2.2 and 2.3 that there were differences among the four types of schools. Among schools which had the lowest dropout rates, there were some schools (selective vocational) which had a high percentage of low income students. Again, among schools with the lowest dropout rates, there were also some of schools (selective vocational and nonselective integrated) which had considerably lower reading percentile scores. Tables 2.4 and 3.1 appear to be atypical in this regard as all

schools with low dropout rates have nearly identical attendance rates.

There is practically no difference in the attendance rates reported for 1983 and 1984 as discussed above. Yet, when examining dropout rates in our prior study ("We Have a Choice", 1986.), we found there were some fluctuations in the dropout rates of the entering freshmen classes of 1978, 1979, and 1980. These fluctuations, while small, were clearly noticeable. Upon inquiry, these fluctuations were found to be due to such historical occurrences as a teachers' union strike and the initiation of the Renaissance Program. (The Renaissance Program delayed elementary school graduation for underachievers and, thus, in its initial year, positively affected the achievement level of entering freshmen.) As shown by comparing Tables 2.4 and 3.1, the attendance rates, however, for 1983 and 1984 are unaffected by history.

Chapter 4

State Funding Formula: A Lack of Monetary Incentive for Schools to Reduce Dropout Rate and Chronic Truancy?

Illinois, like many other states, uses the the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) as a basis for the computation of state funding reimbursement to local schools. (For a discussion of the sources and amounts of funds available for pre-kindergarten through post secondary programs administered by the Illinois State Board of Education, see State, Local, and Federal Financing for Illinois Public Schools, 1985 - 1986, Springfield, IL: Illinois State Board of Education) The prior Chapter focused on attendance reported by the Chicago Public Schools annually and the Semester reports prepared by the individual schools. The monthly individual school attendance report, which was the basis of the Tables 2.4 and 3.1, will now be examined as it forms the basis for the State's computation of the Average Daily Attendance.

Exhibit 4.1 shows the Illinois State Board of Education's Department of Finance and Reimbursements form for "General State Aid Entitlement." This form is filled out on the School District level. Chicago is a single School District (#299).

CODE
REGION
DISTRICT NAME

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Department of Finance and Reimbursements
Reimbursements Section
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

GENERAL STATE AID ENTITLEMENT FOR 1985 1986

INSTRUCTIONS Complete on triplicate and submit white and pink copies to your Regional Superintendent by June 20 who will forward the white copy to the address at top of form by July 15. Please ensure that Line 1, Column 1, Line 9, Column 2, and Line 11 are completed or this claim will be rejected.

PART I SUPPORTING DATA

CLAIMABLE PUPILS ONLY: (Pupils Claimed Under Section 18-8)

LINE	CALENDAR BEGIN Mo. Day (1)	CALENDAR END Mo. Day (2)	DAYS ATTENDED PRE KINDERGARTEN (Handicapped) (3)	KINDERGARTEN (4)	ELEMENTARY 1-6 (5)	ELEMENTARY 7-8 (6)	HIGH SCHOOL 9-12 (7)	TOTALS Columns (3) + (4) + (5) + (6) + (7) (8)	DAYS SCHOOL WAS IN SESSION (9)	ADA TOTAL COL. 8 ÷ COL. 9 (10)
1		9 30								
2	10 1	10 31								
3	11 1	11 30								
4	12 1	12 31								
5	1 1	1 31								
6	2 1	2 28								
7	3 1	3 31								
8	4 1	4 30								
9	5 1									
10	TOTALS									

11 ADA of resident pupils for whom tuition is paid to another local education agency included above on Line 10, Column 10 (see instructions before completing)

NON-CLAIMABLE PUPILS: (Pupils Claimed Under Sections 14-7.03, 18-3, and Tuition Pupils)

	Mo. Month									
12	TOTALS									

BEST THREE MONTHS ATTENDANCE DATA (For Claimable Pupils Only)
Determine best 3 months ADA from Col. (10) and copy the month number into Col. (11). Copy data from Cols. (3), (4), and (5) into Col. (12); Col. (6) data into Col. (13); Col. (7) data into Col. (14); and Col. (9) data into Col. (15).

	BEST 3 MONTHS LINE NUMBER (11)	(PRE K - 6) COL. (3) PLUS COL. (4) PLUS COL. (5) (12)	(7-8) COL. (6) (13)	(9-12) COL. (7) (14)	DAYS SCHOOL WAS IN SESSION COL. (9) (15)
13					
14					
15					
16	Totals				

AFFIDAVIT

We, the undersigned, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that the foregoing statements are true to the best of our knowledge and belief, that said school district has complied with the requirements of The School Code of Illinois as set forth in Sections 10-19, 10-20.12, 10-22.5, 18-12, 24-4, 27-3, 27-4, and 27-21, and has in all other respects conducted school according to law.

Date — Signature of Superintendent, Principal or Teacher

Date — Signature of Clerk or Secretary of School Board

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Date — Signature of Regional Superintendent

17 Pre K-6 ADA — Line 16, Col. (12) ÷ Line 16, Col. (15)

18 7-8 ADA — Line 16, Col. (13) ÷ Line 16, Col. (15)

19 7-8 WADA — Line 18 × 1.05

20 9-12 ADA — Line 16, Col. (14) ÷ Line 16, Col. (15)

21 9-12 WADA — Line 20 × 1.25

22 1984-1985 District WADA (Line 17 plus Lines 19 and 21)

23 1983-1984 District WADA

24 1982-1983 District WADA

25 1984-1985 Chapter 1 Eligibles

26 1983 Real Property Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) $

27 1983 Corporate Personal Property (CPP) Replacement Payments[a] $

28 _____ Total Tax Rate %

[a] Received through calendar year 1984

29 1983 CPP Replacement EAV (Line 27 ÷ Line 28) $

30 1983 General State Aid EAV (Total of Lines 26 and 29) $

31 1983 Actual Operating Tax Rate %

32 General State Aid Entitlement for 1984-1985 $

SCHOOL CALENDAR DATA

Days school was in session (Line 10, Column 9)

Approved Institute(s) and or Workshop(s) (Not to exceed four)

Approved Parent-Teacher Conference Day(s) (Not to exceed two)[b]

Approved Act of God Day(s)

Approved Energy Emergency Day(s)

Total Days[b]

[a] See instructions for explanation.

[b] Must be 180 or more or penalty will be applied (Section 18-12, The School Code of Illinois)

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ISBE 50-11 (2/86)

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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EXHIBIT 41

Notice under "Part 1", in the second and third columns labeled "Calendar" are the nine months of the school year (lines 1 through 9). Columns 3 through 8 provide space to record "Days Attended." Column 10 indicates the "ADA."

Notice the third section of "Part 1" which is labeled "Best Three Months Attendance Data." School Districts are instructed on how to complete this Form in a seven page pamphlet titled: "Instructions for Completing General State Aid Entitlement" available from the Illinois State Board of Education. Exhibit 4.2 shows page 5 from this pamphlet which discusses "the best three months" computation. These instructions refer to column 11, lines 13 through 15 of the form in Exhibit 4.1.

EXHIBIT 4.2

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c. If District A sent 20 vocational education pupils to an area vocational center for one-half day, paid a fee or tuition to the center, and these pupils attended a total of 1,496 days in a 176 day year at the center and 1,496 days in a 176 day year at District A, then the attendance would be recorded as follows:

1. Monthly days of attendance would be recorded on Lines 1-9 in Column 7 such that Line 10, Column 8 would equal 2,992 (1,496 + 1,496).

2. 17.00 (2,992 ÷ 176) would be recorded on Line 10, Column 10.

3. 8.50 (1,496 ÷ 176) would be recorded on Line 11.

B. Non-Claimable Pupils (Line 12)

A non-claimable pupil is (1) a pupil who does not reside within the district and attends on a tuition basis as provided in Section 10-20.12a or (2) a pupil residing in an orphanage or children's home for which the district claims tuition reimbursement under either Section 14-7.03 or 18-3, The School Code of Illinois. Pupils residing in foster family homes who are eligible for special education orphanage reimbursement are non-claimable pupils for General State Aid purposes. These pupils are claimable under Section 14-7.03 of The School Code of Illinois. There has been some confusion regarding children's homes and foster family homes. Children's Homes, for example, are Methodist Children's Homes or Catholic Children's Homes. A foster family home is a private residence in which a pupil is placed by the State of Illinois.

Line 12 - Insert the total days of attendance for the regular school year for the non-claimable pupils in the same manner as for claimable pupils on Line 10.

C. Best Three Months Computation (Lines 13 through 22)

Lines 13 through 15 - Complete as hereinafter prescribed:

Column 11 - Insert the line number of the ~~highest ADA month~~ on Line 13, the next highest on Line 14, and the ~~next highest~~ on Line 15.

Column 12 - Insert the total days of attendance per month from Columns 3, 4, and 5.

Column 13 - Insert the total days of attendance per month from Column 6.

Column 14 - Insert the total days of attendance per month from Column 7.

Column 15 - Insert days school was in session from Column 9.

According to the guidelines, the line numbers of the three highest ADA months from the first section "Part 1" of the "General State Entitlement " form are to be entered on lines 13, 14, and 15. The "total days of attendance" for each of these months is, then, entered in the appropriate column (12, 13, or 14), depending on whether the data is for elementary, middle school, or high school. The "days school was in session" for each of "the three best months" is entered in column 15. The ADA for high schools is found in "Part 1", in the lower center of the page, on line 20, labeled "9-12 ADA" . The ADA is calculated by dividing the total days of attendance for "the three best months" by the total school days for "the three best months."

While the entries made by school districts as large as #299 (Chicago) include a combination of a great many elementary and secondary schools, the relationship of the ADA computation formula to the dropout rate pertains almost exclusively to high schools.

For this reason, it is of interest to examine the computation of the ADA for an individual high school. Exhibit 4.3 illustrates the computation of "Average Daily Attendance (ADA)" for one Chicago Public High School for the school year September, 1982 - June, 1983.

Exhibit 4.4 illustrates the same computation for the same public high school for the following school year, September, 1983 - June, 1984. These computations are based on the same high school and the same school years reported in Tables 2.4 and 3.1 and in Exhibits 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4 . The high school used in these examples is one which is grouped in the category of high dropout rates (52.0% to 71.5%) and is a non-selective segregated type of school.

Exhibit 4.3

Example of Reported Attendance for One Chicago Public High School for School Year 1983 (September, 1982 - June, 1983) *

Calendar Begin Mo-Day	Calendar End Mo-Day	Attendance	Days School Was In Session	A D A	Enrollment	School's Attendance Rate
1982						
-	9-30	50741	17	2985	3163	94.4
10-1	10-31	61083	20	3054	3403	89.8
11-1	11-30	53839	18	2991	3342	89.5
12-1	12-31	49377	17	2904	3292	88.2
1983						
1-1	1-31	54227	19	2854	3254	87.7
2-1	2-28	53856	19	2834	3280	86.4
3-1	3-31	63526	23	2762	3248	85.0
4-1	4-30	40940	15	2729	3169	86.1
5-1	5-31	55055	21	2622	3121	84.0
6-1	-	29008	12	2417	3076	78.6
Totals and Averages						
Semester 1 Total		269268	91	2959	3254	89.8
Semester 2 Total		242387	90	2693	3189	84.5
Year Total		511655	181	2827	3242	87.2
Three Best Months		**55221**	**18**	**3012**	**3302**	**91.0**

* Note that the 1983 Attendance Rate is reported as a 1984 School Characteristic. See Table 2.4. Figures presented in this Exhibit and in Exhibit 4.4 may differ (due to rounding) with figures available elsewhere. For example, the actual yearly attendance reported for this school was 87.3%.

Exhibit 4.4

Example of Reported Attendance for One Chicago Public High School for School Year 1984 (September, 1983 - June, 1984)

Calendar Begin Mo-Day	Calendar End Mo-Day	Attendance	Days School Was In Session	A D A	Enrollment	School's Attendance Rate
1983						
-	9-30	53221	18	2957	3162	93.5
10-1	10-31	14855	5	2971	3384	87.8
11-1	11-30	55882	19	2941	3351	87.8
12-1	12-31	47349	17	2785	3254	85.6
1984						
1-1	1-31	49295	18	2739	3166	86.5
2-1	2-28	54124	20	2706	3094	87.5
3-1	3-31	59098	22	2686	3052	88.0
4-1	4-30	41207	16	2575	2974	86.6
5-1	5-31	55722	22	2533	2887	87.7
6-1	-	45904	20	2295	2815	81.5
Totals and Averages						
Semester 1 Total		220602	77	2865	3244	88.3
Semester 2 Total		256055	100	2561	3086	86.4
Year Total		476657	177	2693	3086	87.2
Three Best Months		**40391**	**15**	**2826**	**3132**	**90.2**

On the far left of Exhibits 4.3 and 4.4 is indicated the calendar months of the school year. (This is the same as column 1 and 2 under the label "Calendar" on the "General State Aid Entitlement" form in Exhibit 4.1.) The attendance for each of these months for this particular high school is indicated in the second column. The third column indicates the number of days school was in session for each of the months. These figures would be the same for the entire school system. The fourth column records the "ADA" which is "attendance" divided by "days school was in session." The fifth column shows the school's enrollment for each of the months of the school year. And, lastly, the school's attendance rate for each of the months is provided in the final column and is the "ADA" divided by the "enrollment."

In Exhibit 4.2, the instructions provide for the choosing of the "three best months" in order to calculate the State Aid Entitlement "ADA" for reimbursement. For the school year 1983 (Exhibit 4.3), the months chosen for this school are circled and would be September, October, and November. For the school year 1984 (Exhibit 4.4), the three best months are also circled and would be September, October, and March.

On the bottom portion of each Exhibit is the total attendance, days school was in session, ADA, and average enrollment for each semester of the school year. The yearly totals and averages, and the totals and averages for "the best three months" are also indicated in this section.

You will notice that the total attendance days for semesters 1 and 2 for school year 1984, as seen in Exhibit 4.4, is the same (with rounding error) as the "total days of attendance for the semester" shown in Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2.

The "attendance" for the "three best months" in Exhibit 4.3 is the sum of (50741 + 61083 + 53839) divided by 3 which equals 55254. The days in session is the average number of the school days of these three months or 18. The "ADA" for the "three best months" is 165,663 divided by 55 or 3012.

The "attendance" for the "three best months" in Exhibit 4.4 is the sum of (53221 + 14855 + 59098) divided by 3 which equals 40391. The days in session is the average number of the school days of these three months or 15. The "ADA" for the "three best months" is 127,174 divided by 45 or 2826.

In Exhibit 4.3, the 1983 attendance rate (attendance divided by enrollment) for "the three best months" for this school was 91.0%. In Exhibit 4.4, the 1984 attendance rate for "the three best months" was 90.2%. The yearly attendance rates for both years are the same for this school at 87.2%.

Clearly, for this school, the attendance rate for "the three best months" is higher than the yearly attendance rate. In fact, this would nearly always be the case for any school since there is nearly always monthly variation in attendance. Thus the "ADA" (3012 in Exhibit 4.3 and 2826 in Exhibit 4.4) is always higher than the yearly average (2827 for 1983 and 2693 for 1984).

In fact, the "ADA" for "the three best months" in 1983 (Exhibit 4.3) is higher than the monthly "ADA" for nine of the ten months recorded. The "ADA" for "the three best months" in 1984 (Exhibit 4.4) is higher than seven of the ten months recorded.

In returning to our earlier discussion concerning attendance for all schools in Tables 2.4 and 3.1, it was shown that schools with HIGH drop out rates had lower average yearly attendance rates and that schools with LOW

dropout rates had higher average yearly attendance rates. In Tables 2.4 and 3.1, the average yearly attendance rate for the 17 non-selective segregated schools with HIGH dropout rates (52% to 71.5%) was 82.0% for 1983 and 83.2% for 1984. For the four non-selective segregated schools with LOW dropout rates (13.8% to 28.9%), the average yearly attendance rate was 91.0% for 1983 and 91.9% for 1984.

The "ADA" FOR 1983 based on "the three best months" gives the HIGH dropout rate school, used in our example, an attendance rate (91.0%) similar to that of the average yearly attendance rate (91.1%) for a selective academic school with a LOW dropout rate. (See Table 2.4.) In other words the "ADA" used in the State reimbursement formula does not and cannot relate to the dropout rate of the school.

Frankly, it was thought that an effective strategy for reducing dropouts would be to demonstrate the increased amount of funding that would be received by a district due to the retention of dropouts and the attendance of chronic truants. It was thought that the absence of those students who had dropped out and the non-attendance of the truants, many of whom would be future dropouts, would result in less state funding for the school district. But, having observed the enhanced attendance rates using the "three best months" formula for "ADA" in Exhibits 4.3 and 4.4 for one school, it is clear that the impact of that strategy, by which schools encourage student attendance because of the monetray value it will receive related to improved student attendance, is likely to be diminished because it is unlikely that State funding can be increased in this way.

Chapter 5

Lost Learning Days: Lost Funding?

Table 5.1 shows the actual days of attendance for all Chicago Public High Schools for the 1984 school year. It also shows the number of possible days of attendance if every student attended school every day that school was legally in session. As seen in Tables 2.4 and 3.1, schools with the HIGH dropout rates (52.0% to 71.5%) had proportionately fewer days of attendance than schools with LOW dropout rates (13.8% to 28.9%). If the total "actual attendance days" in Table 5.1 is divided by the total "possible days of attendance", the quotient is the average daily attendance rate as previously reported in Table 3.1. Possible days of attendance is simply the average yearly enrollment multiplied by the number of legal days school is in session. For non-selective segregated high schools with HIGH dropout rates, the quotient obtained from the figures in Table 5.1 is 83.2% (3,460,046 divided by 4,156,206). (This was also reported in Table 3.1.)

Table 5.1

1984 Actual Days of Attendance
Compared With Possible Attendance Days*
for Each Type of School by Low to High Dropout Rates

School Dropout Rate**	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%	
School Type					
Selective Academic					
Attendance Days	1,342,065	---	---	---	
Possible Attendance Days *	1,478,300	---	---	---	
(N)	(3)				(3)
Selective Vocational					
Attendance Days	1,367,422	275,285	---	---	
Possible Attendance Days	1,517,568	311,724	---	---	
(N)	(4)	(1)			(5)
Non-Selective Integrated					
Attendance Days	1,117,342	1,391,404	1,392,300	225,518	
Possible Attendance Days	1,227,213	1,558,093	1,592,532	280,387	
(N)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(1)	(16)
Non-Selective Segregated					
Attendance Days	1,214,885	1,204,608	2,597,371	3,360,046	
Possible Attendance Days	1,335,887	1,379,634	3,024,719	4,156,206	
(N)	(4)	(6)	(11)	(17)	(38)
All Schools					
Attendance Days	5,041,714	2,871,297	3,989,671	3,685,564	
Possible Attendance Days	5,558,968	3,249,451	4,617,251	4,436,593	
(N)	(15)	(12)	(17)	(18)	(62)

* "Possible Attendance Days" is equal to enrollment multiplied by 177 school days in 1984. Figures presented are rounded.

** Based on dropout rates for class of 1984 as reported by Chicago Panel of Public School Finance in Dropouts from Chicago Public Schools (1984).

Looking at the difference between possible days of attendance and the actual days of attendance, as reported by the schools in documents similar to Exhibit 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4, it is possible to calculate days of class missed due to absence. These "lost learning days"* are reported in Table 5.2 for the the different types of schools by LOW to HIGH dropout rates for the year 1984. As shown in Table 5.2, for the 62 Chicago Public High Schools taken as a whole, there were 2,373,997 "lost learning days" for the 1984 school year. Schools days missed due to absence are critical to the students in the learning process. For this reason, we refer to days of absence as "lost learning days."

* This concept was introduced to us by Sue Davenport of Designs for Change while discussing dropout rates in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia.

Table 5.2

Actual Lost Learning Days in 1984
For Each Type of School by Low to High Dropout Rates

School Dropout Rate*	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%	
School Type					
Selective Academic					
Lost Learning Days	136,235	---	---	---	
(N)	(3)				(3)
Selective Vocational					
Lost Learning Days	150,146	36,439	---	---	
(N)	(4)	(1)			(5)
Non-Selective Integrated					
Lost Learning Days	109,871	166,689	200,232	54,869	
(N)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(1)	(16)
Non-Selective Segregated					
Lost Learning Days	121,002	175,026	427,348	696,160	
(N)	(4)	(6)	(11)	(17)	(38)
All Schools					
Lost Learning Days	517,254	378,154	627,580	751,029	
(N)	(15)	(12)	(17)	(18)	(62)

Total = 2,373,997

*Based on dropout rates for class of 1984 as reported by Chicago Panel of Public School Finance in Dropouts from Chicago Public Schools (1984).

According to Dr. William Humm, Research Specialist for the Illinois State Board of Education, the attendance figures submitted to the State (See Exhibit 4.1) are checked through the use of established computer procedures in order to test for inconsistencies. He also said that the State does not presently conduct on site checks for accuracy. Because of the lack of monitoring of attendance at the site level, the various tables based on reported, but unverified, attendance data must be viewed with caution.

While the attendance rates might be higher than expected - -because it appears that chronic truancy would precede dropping out -- the patterns indicating a relationship between low dropout rates and high attendance and high dropout rates and lower attendance appear consistent with expected results. Thus, it seems worthwhile to explore the potential monetary loss that District #299 (Chicago) would incur if a system of reimbursement was initiated based entirely on rewarding school systems on a per diem basis for student attendance. If this were the case, "lost learning days" would translate directly into lost funding for the school district. Table 5.3 provides an estimate of lost revenue based on student absence for the 62 Chicago Public High Schools for the 1984 school year. As seen in Table 5.3, there would be a $38,430,886 loss to District #299 due to absences if such a formula was adopted by State, Federal, and local governments. While this is a large amount of money, it is but a small proportion of the annual budget for District #299 (Chicago). If the attendance data, as presently reported, is quite conservative and does not include chronic truants and dropouts, then, it is possible that such a per diem based formula could provide a substantial monetary incentive for schools to improve attendance. If per diem monetary incentives were initiated, it would also be necessary to

implement procedures to insure a more accurate reporting of attendance data.

Table 5.3

Potential Monetary Loss in School Budget
if Funding Reflected Cost Due to Lost Learning Days*
for Each Type of High School by Low to High Dropout Rates

School Dropout Rate**	LOW 13.8% - 28.9%	MED. LOW 29.0% - 41.9%	MED. HIGH 42.0% - 51.9	HIGH 52.0% - 71.5%	
School Type					
Selective Academic					
Approximate Cost of Lost Learning Days	$2,302,371	---	---	---	
(N)	(3)				(3)
Selective Vocational					
Approximate Cost of Lost Learning Days	$2,537,467	$615,819	---	---	
(N)	(4)	(1)			(5)
Non-Selective Integrated					
Approximate Cost of Lost Learning Days	$1,856,820	$2,817,044	$3,383,920	$927,286	
(N)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(1)	(16)
Non-Selective Segregated					
Approximate Cost of Lost Learning Days	$2,044,935	$2,957,939	$7,222,181	$11,765,104	
(N)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(1)	(38)
All Schools					
Approximate Cost of Lost Learning Days	$8,741,592	$6,390,802	$10,606,101	$12,692,390	
(N)	(15)	(12)	(17)	(18)	(62)

* Based on 177 actual attendance days in 1984 at $3,000 per pupil minimum yearly tuition rate. Total approximate cost of lost attendance is $38,430,886. These figures are subject to minor rounding errors.

**Based on dropout rates for class of 1984 as reported by Chicago Panel of Public School Finance in Dropouts from Chicago Public Schools (1984).

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